

Residents Have the Right to Personal Space

Each time we close the bedroom or bathroom door behind us, we claim something that is very important to all people: our right to personal space. However, when a person becomes a resident in a long-term care facility, it does not mean he or she must give up the right to privacy. Here are a few examples of how a long-term care resident's right to privacy/personal space may be respected:

- Show respect for the resident's space. Knock before entering his or her room, or ask before walking behind a privacy curtain.
- Ask before opening a resident's drawer or closet.
- Always close the privacy curtain and bathroom door when appropriate.
- Greet the resident's roommate, if he or she has one, with a warm hello and do your best not to "take over" the room when providing care, etc.
- Enter a resident's private space only when invited, such as after you knock on the door and he or she says, "Come in."
- Know that the resident, like anyone else, may not always feel like talking or participating. Accept their desire to be alone. (However, if a resident's behavior is unusual and you are concerned about it, talk to a nurse right away.)
- If the resident has visitors, allow them to be alone with the resident.
- Let the resident make decisions about his or her personal space.

Put yourself in the resident's shoes. If you'd want privacy and space to do something, give them the same respect.

Source: www.extendicare.com/consumer/